

D R A F T
Meeting Minutes
Delaware Population Consortium
October 26, 2006
10:00 a.m.
House Hearing Room
Legislative Hall
Dover, DE

In Attendance:

Kelly Crumpley – Kent Co.
Derrick Lightfoot, AICP – City of
Wilmington
Mike Mahaffie – State Planning
Coordination
Ed Ratledge – University of Delaware
Don Berry – Department of Education
Javier Arce – DSHA

Dan Blevins – WILMAPCO
Josh Waltz – Dover/Kent MPO
Ed McNeeley – GIC
Janelle Cornwell – City of Dover
Brad Groznik – Dover Post
Whittona Burrell – Census Bureau
Mike DuRoss – DELDOT

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:15 a.m.

Approval of Minutes of Past Meetings

Dan Blevins made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the June 21, 2006, DPC meeting as presented. Ed Ratledge seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Don Berry made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the September 20, 2006, DPC meeting as presented. Ed Ratledge seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2006 Population Projections Series

Ed Ratledge gave an overview of the final draft of the 2006 Population projections Series.

Ed noted that the Center for disease Control have issued an update of population estimates by age, race and sex adjusted to four race categories instead of the multiple categories that had been used in the 2000 Census. The Consortium has used those new estimates as a guide for distributing population projections by race. In recent years, Ed has had to create his own form of distribution.

Ed pointed out that the Population numbers for 2000 through 2005 are now benchmarked to the Census Bureau's official estimates for the state, the counties and the major cities.

He added that there have been concerns about where the Census Bureau gets their birth and death data for Delaware. While he plans to meet with Bureau estimates staff to discuss the idea of their using more accurate data from DHSS, he has used those DHSS data on births and deaths instead of the federal data. That does not change the population projection totals but has some effect on the components of change (natural increase versus migration).

There was also a fair amount of change in the labor force data that was used in creating the 2006 projections. Ed said that he tried to use as much of the published data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics as possible, in the same way that he uses Census Bureau population estimates as benchmarks.

As a result, the 2006 projections are the first in which all of the past years are benchmarked to published federal estimates.

Ed led a detailed discussion of the various sources of data used to project employment and jobs.

He has used unemployment insurance system data to project jobs by place of work. This is county-level data and is more useful than the state-level survey data in the Current Employment Series. On the other hand, there is no data in that series about self-employed persons and so that component is missing from the projections. Ed suggested that the actual number of jobs is probably slightly higher than what the projections show, but the overall picture is more accurate, since he has used the best available data.

The military jobs category shows the loss of jobs that DAFB experienced in 2001/2002. There is nothing to suggest that those job numbers will drop any further, so he has held that number constant in the out-years.

The net commuting projections are still driven by the data collected in 2000 by the Census Bureau.

And there are issues and uncertainty about what the affect of the military base closing and realignment process might be in terms of bringing new jobs into Cecil County, some of which are filled by New Castle County residents.

Looking at the projections as a whole, Ed noted that the population out to 2030 is projected higher than the 2005 series had suggested. Projections for Kent County have been raised by almost 9,000 in 2030. Projections for New Castle County have dropped slightly and Sussex County's projections show a stable, regular, upward growth.

In New Castle County, the net migration has been negative for the 65-and-older population. Between 2000 and 2005, that age group has tended to move away. That is driving the projected older population down a bit in the projections.

Ed next looked at the projections for each county in some detail.

Kent County has shown a rapid growth in the last few years, but that pace of growth is expected to start to slow, though it will remain higher than historic trends for the near future. Political pressures may also serve to slow that growth in much the way that growth in New Castle County slowed following the approval of a more restrictive building code in the 1990s.

The net commuting for Kent Co. is still low, but is slowly growing.

Ed noted that the data show that in-migration into Kent county has grown to the same levels as in-migration into Sussex County, though he does not expect that trend to continue at such a high level.

He added that he is waiting for 2005 tax return data from the IRS that would show whether or not the migration from New Jersey and Pennsylvania is still as much of a factor.

The major cities for which the Consortium provides projections – Wilmington, Newark and Dover – all stayed within a few percentage points of the Census Bureau's estimates. Therefore, Ed has not changed the projections for those cities from the projections published in 2005. There was not enough additional information available to justify re-projecting the cities.

New Castle County continues to show slower growth. Net migration continues to decline for New Castle County and recently reached half of the migration level of Kent County.

The 2006 projections show a major drop from the 2005 series for jobs in New Castle County. That is largely due to the change in federal Jobs data noted earlier.

Ed added that the New Castle County population is aging, causing a drop in labor force participation. He said that in the out years, the 0-19 age group and the 65+ age group will be about the same size. That means a large dependant population and a tight labor market.

He said that migration into New Castle County is now half of what it was five years ago. This is largely because of the loss of jobs in New Castle County in the last ten years or so.

In Sussex County, net migration will eventually account for more than 100% of growth. The number of deaths will eventually be more than the number of births. This is related to the trend of in-migration of older persons.

Net commuting is still negative.

Don Berry made a motion to approve the projections. Dan Blevins seconded the Motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Election of Officers

The Vice Chair, who would have assumed the Chair with the annual meeting, took a new job and has left the Consortium. As is traditional in similar cases in the Consortium, Kelly Crumpley agreed to continue as Chair.

Ed Ratledge nominated Derrick Lightfoot as Vice Chair. There were no other nominations and Derrick was elected unanimously.

Derrick Lightfoot nominated Mike Mahaffie as Secretary. There were no other nominations and Mike was elected unanimously.

Other Items

Derrick Lightfoot gave a brief report on the recent MD/DE APA Chapter conference. He noted that the regional APA leadership sees a need to reach-out and involve more professional groups and organizations like the Consortium. He hopes to see more interaction between the APA and the Consortium in the future.

Whittona Burrell gave a quick update of activities by the Census Bureau. The Bureau is planning now for training for local government sin 2007 to perform the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA). She also discussed the new American Community Survey.

A next meeting has tentatively been set for December 13, 2006.

Derrick Lightfoot made a motion to adjourn. Dan Blevins seconded the Motion. The motion passed unanimously.